DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 099 436 UD 014 636

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| TITLE | The Regents External High School Diploma: A Proposal to the Commissioner of Education. |
| INSTITUTION | Syracuse Univ. Research Corp., N.Y. |
| SPONS AGENCY | New York State Education Dept., Albany. Regents External High School Diploma Program. |
| PUB DATE | 1 Jul 73 |
| NOTE | 72p. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.75 HC-$3.15 PLUS POSTAGE |
| DESCRIPTORS | Curriculum Development; Dropout Programs; Dropout Rehabilitation; Educational Assessment; Educational Needs; Educational Policy; *External Degree Programs; High School Curriculum; *High School Students; Program Evaluation; *Program Proposals; Public Policy; *State Programs |
| IDENTIFIERS | *New York |

ABSTRACT

This proposal is for an additional New York State secondary certification to be called the Regents External High School Diploma. The new diploma program has been designed to provide a flexible and credible alternative to the four-year high school diploma and to the New York State Equivalency Diploma. The external diploma ordinarily would be awarded by a Board of Cooperative Educational Services superintendent or a superintendent of one of the Big Six city school systems on behalf of the State Educational Department. State-approved performance criteria together with individualized learning objectives will be certified by means of a localized assessment process. Teachers from local school districts and others qualified by experience would be trained as assessors prepared to enable a candidate to receive recognition and certification of competencies wherever and whenever acquired. The time and location of learning experiences needed to prepare for such a diploma would vary with each candidate's objectives, motivations, abilities, prior experiences, and personal situation. The concept could be tested and refined over a three-year period in Syracuse and the five surrounding counties. Accountability to the State Education Department for the academic quality of the proposal would reside in a Regional Committee for the External High School Diploma. (Author/JM)

ED 099 36

# THE REGENTS EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

## A Proposal to the Commissioner of Education

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Submitted by

The Regional Learning Service of Central New York

on behalf of

THE DESIGN GROUP FOR THE REGENTS EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

July 1, 1973

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CHAPTER I

## The Proposal Abstract

This proposal is for an additional New York State secondary certification to be called the Regents External High School Diploma. The new diploma program has been designed to provide a flexible and credible alternative to the four-year high school diploma and to the New York State Equivalency Diploma. The external diploma ordinarily would be awarded by a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) superintendent or a superintendent of one of the Big Six city school systems on behalf of the State Education Department. State-approved performance criteria together with individualized learning objectives will be certified by means of a localized assessment process. Teachers from local school districts and others qualified by experience would be trained as assessors prepared to enable a candidate to receive recognition and certification of competencies wherever and whenever acquired. The time and location of learning experiences needed to prepare for such a diploma would vary with each candidate's objectives, motivations, abilities, prior experiences, and personal situation.

The concept could be tested and refined over a three-year period in Syracuse and the five surrounding counties.[1] If it proves to be valuable in meeting outstanding needs, it could become a State-wide program. Accountability to the State Education Department for the academic quality of the proposal would reside in a Regional Committee

[1]Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego counties.

for the External High School Diploma made up of local educators and school board members, candidates for the external diploma, businessmen, and labor leaders appointed by the Department. The administrative agency executing the demonstration under the direction of the Regional Committee would be the Regional Learning Service of Central New York (RLS).[2] Financial assistance would be provided by the State Education Department for three years while permanent means of support are explored and negotiated with local school districts, industries, unions, community, and Federal agencies. If subsequently adopted as a Statewide program, its administration could be assumed by city school districts in the Big Six and by BOCES elsewhere, or by other regional bodies that might emerge in the near future.

The concept of an additional alternative diploma was proposed in the fall of 1972 to the Commissioner and officials of the Department as the result of a one-year investigation of educational needs in Central New York by the Syracuse University Research Corporation (SURC) in close collaboration with local educators. In December 1972, the Commissioner personally urged SURC to draft guidelines for such a diploma; on March 1, 1973, the State Education Department contracted with SURC for "Phase I of a project for the development of guidelines to introduce and test an alternative program for earning a high school diploma." The contract called for "a joint planning process

[2]The Regional Learning Service, a division of the Syracuse University Research Corporation, was designed and endorsed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Council of Central New York and the Central New York Consortium for the External Degree composed of the 14 universities and colleges in the five counties. For details on RLS, see Appendices I & II.

by representatives of business, labor and education -- the State Education Department, local administrators, teachers, students and parents," and was to be completed June 30, 1973.

A planning body called the "Design Group for the Regents External High School Diploma" was created to produce the guidelines. It included the following representation from the five counties with special consideration for inclusion of school districts engaged in Project Redesign:[3]

BOCES superintendents

chief school administrators

school board members

teachers and counselors chosen by teacher organizations

college administrators and professors

business executives

trade union leaders

students and dropouts

SED official designated by Thomas Sheldon

The full Design Group of 30 members met three times in plenary session on March 30, May 8, and June 11. Each member worked on one of five task forces which, through frequent meetings, produced reports on (1) needs and rationale, (2) administration and finance, (3) assessment mechanisms, (4) areas and levels of competency, and (5) educational resources. Consultations were held with employers,

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[3]See Appendix III for Design Group membership.

chief school administrators, teachers, counselors, and potential clients of all ages and backgrounds. In addition, the officers of local teacher organizations made important recommendations. The proposal is therefore informed by the experience of those who teach, counsel, and administer education in the city school systems in Syracuse, Oswego, Cortland, Hamilton, and Auburn, and several rural schools. Valuable assistance was also gained through consultation with a number of officials of the State Education Department; they should not be held responsible, of course, for the final product.[4] The resulting reports were combined and revised under instructions of the full group by an editorial committee representing each task force. This final product was circulated to each member for concurrence before submission.

During the course of the planning project, certain issues assumed major importance. A strong consensus emerged that an external diploma program should incorporate the following features:

1. State certification based on local demonstration of competencies;

2. assessment procedures combining flexibility and credibility;

3. curricular designs combining minimum generalized objectives for all candidates together with individualized options for each;

4. maximum access to opportunities for learning and certification;

5. decentralized counseling services;

6. strong linkages to existing school systems by means of

[4]See Appendix IV for list of officials of the State Education Department consulted on Design of External Diploma Program.

participation on a Regional Policy Committee, and employment of teachers in counseling and assessing functions;

7. structured accountability at all levels;

8. student participation in setting goals, forming curriculum, choosing assessment procedures, and renewing the entire program.

We believe the design for a Regents External High School Diploma Program embodies these elements.

The members of the Design Group respectfully request the approval and support of the Commissioner of Education to undertake a three-year demonstration of the program. It could be set up from July through December 1973, and initiated with candidates from January through June, 1974. Budget requirements will be submitted when the proposal is accepted.

## CHAPTER II

### The Need for an Alternative Diploma

"Who's out there?" "Who will benefit from flexible learning options that can lead to a high school diploma?" "The external diploma sounds good in theory, but are there many people who will really want it?" These are the questions which the Design Group members first asked each other.

The spontaneous outpouring of example candidates at the group's initial meeting testified to the need for a new external learning program. The examples included a variety of people in many circumstances. The school leavers of all kinds -- the economically disadvantaged, the ill, the disturbed, the disenchanted. The confined -- residents of hospitals, prisons, drug centers. The homebound -- physically handicapped, pregnant teen-agers, mothers, the elderly. The isolated -- ethnic minorities, rural residents. These include persons with exceptional talents and those with limited abilities.[1]

Statistics show that 7.7 million New York State citizens over the age of 18 do not have a diploma.[2] In Central New York (Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego counties), 200,000 adults (43% of those over 25) are not high school graduates.[3] In addition, of the 16-21 year age group, approximately 28,000 (34%) do not presently hold a diploma and are not

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[1] See Appendix V for analysis of potential candidates for the Regents External High School Diploma.

[2] U. S. Government Census, 1970

[3] Ibid.

enrolled in school.[4] A survey of large industrial concerns in the greater Syracuse area revealed that 23 percent of their employees were without a diploma.[5]

To verify the need for an external diploma, Design Group members talked to people without diplomas in many age groups and situations.[6] Many were emphatic about the disadvantages and humiliations of not having a diploma and about the difficulties of earning one.

-- Two 17-year-olds in a court rehabilitation project who did not want to go back to school saw a new chance in work-study for credit;

-- a 48-year-old plumber, who runs his own business, regrets that he never could finish high school and would seriously consider participation in an external diploma program ;

-- a 41-year-old woman who left school when she was 15 foresaw more fulfilling job opportunities open to her if an external learning program were available ;

-- a young man who works in an automotive shop believes achieving a high school diploma would enlarge his self-esteem and would set a good example for his young son ;

-- a 32-year-old woman states, "It is hard when a woman has children to support. I want more general education and training in nursing;"

-- a 24-year-old man who left school in tenth grade "would like to get my diploma and be a computer operator." If you don't have a diploma he thinks, "Employers prejudge you without giving you a chance to see if you can qualify;"

-- a 24-year-old woman want to "complete my education and learn how to be a nurse. It is awful hard for a woman to find a job, especially when you don't have too much qualification or education."

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Regional Learning Service, 1971

[6] See Appendix VI for Case Studies of Potential Candidates for the External Diploma.

Concurrent with the work of the Design Group, the Policy Institute of the Syracuse University Research Corporation conducted a study of the continuing education needs in the Model Cities areas of Syracuse. Eleven corporations, with an aggregate employment of 21,500 persons, were asked to describe the educational and skill levels they require, and the means they use to judge the qualifications of job candidates.[7] Preference is usually given to persons who have the high school diploma. Employers encourage non-diplomed personnel to achieve that credential and are generally willing to pay tuition costs.

The interviews and survey produced ample evidence that there is interest and need among many people in an alternative way of obtaining a high school diploma. Existing programs have not met their diverse needs for increased job opportunities, more training, higher self-esteem, greater self-fulfillment, and more encouragement to be a participating member of society. The needs of the people "out there" -- beyond the schools -- were the guiding factors in determining the shape of the diploma itself.

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[7] Companies interviewed were: General Electric, Wells & Coverly, Lincoln National Bank and Trust, First Trust and Deposit, Pepsi-Cola, Agway, Niagara Mohawk, Allied Chemical, Borden, Inc., Research Centre, Hotel Syracuse, Allen Tool Corporation.

CHAPTER III

## The Diploma Design: An Overview

The challenge of living joyfully and constructively in America at the end of the 20th century was the point of departure for designing curriculum and establishing diploma criteria for the Regents External High School Diploma. Over the next 50 years, Americans will be confronted by forces for radical change in their environment and a burgeoning array of options in occupations and life-styles. Central to the deliberations of the Design Group was the belief that the external diploma should encourage candidates to view learning as a lifelong process enabling them to adapt thoughtfully to changing situations. Achievement of the skills and competencies for the external diploma should aid persons in becoming active citizens and responsible members of family and community, equipped to have an impact on the shape and direction of personal and social life.

To fulfill these aims for all ages a highly prescriptive curriculum splintered into academic disciplines would be inappropriate. Independent, aware, and committed decision makers are not best developed by regimentation. On the other hand, a diploma awarded by the State of New York needs recognized standards. It must represent the same order of achievement across the State. It must bear credibility in the eyes of employers and admissions officers in post-secondary institutions.

Specific criteria have, therefore, been developed with the object

of combining student-centered flexibility with quality standards. While educational goals are often stated in normative terms, the Design Group chose to express the external diploma goals as competency outcomes which can be demonstrated as observed behavior. The competencies would be of practical value in themselves and their achievement by one candidate relative to others is not considered important for purposes of the external diploma. All candidates would be expected to meet general educational development objectives in certain common areas of basic competencies (e.g., communication and computation) and in optional areas that are appropriate to their individual goals.

Design Group members foresaw the need to advise a broad range of people on how they might avail themselves of the new opportunities for learning and certification opened up by the external diploma program. While there is no intention of replacing or competing with existing school and BOCES programs, people of all ages and educational levels should have access to the external program. Persons who want external high school diplomas should be able to consult counselors able to explain the program, to diagnose the level of the candidate's preparation, to facilitate additional learning experiences, and to arrange for assessment and certification.[1]

An "external" assessment process is an essential element of the

[1] In the fall of 1973, the Regional Learning Service of Central New York with Federal and foundation funding, will train 26 learning consultants and in January 1974, hire them part-time to provide guidance and facilitation services to people of all ages and educational levels seeking additional learning experiences with or without secondary or post-secondary certification.

external diploma program. To serve those whose needs are not met by the centralized and standardized assessment system of the New York High School Equivalency Diploma, assessment for the external diploma must be decentralized and individualized. To assure consistency and quality of diploma criteria, the assessments must be supervised and reviewed. The definition of criteria in terms of behavioral objectives permits the use of a wide diversity of assessment instruments and techniques. Objectives are designed to encourage assessors to judge abilities in real life situations and familiar contexts. Diploma candidates will have a choice between alternative means of demonstrating their skills and knowledge to assessors who are trained and supervised by a coordinator accountable to the State Education Department. The aim is a humanistic determination of competencies which are relevant to life situations.

The external diploma program aims to encourage self-renewal and lifelong learning. Knowledge and skills gained through life experiences are often commensurate with or superior to those of high school graduates, in the view of Design Group members. The expected competencies and the means of assessment in the external diploma program will be clear and concrete to potential candidates. Those out of school, who apply their competencies effectively in life situations but poorly on lengthy standardized examinations with tight time limits, could find reassurance. Those who underestimate their competencies could discover that a diploma is more accessible

than they assumed from looking at the trigonometry and biology textbooks of their friends or children in school. Those who have developed occupational skills in the home, on the job, and in apprentice programs could receive diploma credit for those competencies. Those who wish to prepare for diploma certification on their own could find definitive guidelines. Those who do earn the external diploma could gain incentive and confidence for further learning.

The external diploma cannot solve all credentialing problems. Traditional diplomas represent a wide range of achievement with no minimum skills insured except in the case of the equivalency diploma. The conclusion emerged in the Design Group that there should be, along with the new external diploma, a "Certified Individual Inventory," which would state the specific competencies of the holder. The assessment process and mechanism designed for the external diploma program could be used to certify to the State the achievement of competencies. The inventory or transcript would be issued upon graduation from high school and upon awarding of external and equivalency diplomas. In addition, those who drop out of school without a diploma could apply for a Certified Individual Inventory, which could be updated throughout life as new competencies are acquired.

Education is a lifelong process both inside and outside of the classroom. Opportunities for certification, therefore, should not be confined to the school. The five-county region can boast of a remarkable variety of learning resources. The problem is not so

much a need to create more opportunities or erect more buildings, but to make better use of what is already available. For many people, traditional institutions provide the happiest combination of learning experiences that will lead to a high school diploma. But for those who, for whatever reason, may choose a different route to earn that credential, the vast array of resources in the Central New York community can be tapped to provide a creditable instructional program.[2]

The important criteria for both the individual and society are what a person knows and can do rather than how long and where he studies. The external high school diploma and the Certified Individual Inventory will give recognition for demonstrated achievement and will make a wider range of validated learning experiences available to people of all ages.

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[2]See Appendix VII for Learning Resources for the External Diploma.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Process of Assessment

"Where am I going,
How shall I get there, and
How will I know I've arrived?"[1]

At the heart of the proposed New York State External High School Diploma is the answer to Robert Mager's question, "How will I know I've arrived?" For if the program is to offer a new option which will give a candidate credit for what he or she knows or can do regardless of where, when, how, or from whom it has been learned, then the burden of proof falls on finding an appropriate way to evaluate that knowledge or ability. The means must be both varied enough to allow for a wide range of individual differences and stringent enough to meet certain standards of quality and thus to merit the granting of credit which may be applied towards a State-approved diploma. Flexibility and credibility must go hand in hand.

Also inherent in the idea of offering another choice is the role of the candidate himself. The very existence of the choice is based on a philosophy which emphasizes candidate participation not only in setting goals and finding ways to meet them but also in the assessment process itself. To refer to Mager's question again, "How do I know I've arrived?"

The recommendations for assessment which follow are made with the concerns of flexibility, credibility, and candidate participation in mind.

[1]Robert F. Mager, Developing Attitude Toward Learning (Palo Alto, 1968), p. vii.

Flexibility is provided in the individualized program designed for each candidate and in the process which makes available to the learner a number of support people as well as a variety of techniques to assist in measuring achievement. In all cases, the means focus on the actual competency attained rather than on a normative standard, the amount of time spent, or the grade earned. Flexibility is also included in the recommended system of accumulating competencies for diploma qualification. Built into the assessment process itself are alternate paths which the candidate might take.

Credibility is assured by developing assessment criteria and techniques which are approved by both a Regional Committee for the External Diploma and the State Education Department. A Coordinator of Assessment would be responsible to the Regional Committee for applying the State-approved guidelines. The Regional Committee would monitor the assessment process and make periodic recommendations for changes in criteria or techniques. While a variety of persons, with a range of backgrounds and experiences, might be employed as assessors in many areas, only certified teachers would make assessments in the basic areas of communication and computation. State validation of the diploma itself guarantees its credibility.

For the candidate, participation in the diploma program begins with establishing personal goals and discovering what opportunities for learning and for receiving credit are available. This could occur through consultation with an RLS learning consultant or other counselor in the community. Someone who thinks he or she is already prepared to be assessed in a certain

area, or who wants to know specifically the assessment requirements in a particular area, could also contact the office of the Assessment Coordinator. To assist a prospective candidate in this regard -- or to assist others outside of the Regional Learning Service who might be in a position to help him -- it is recommended that written information describing the program, the assessment procedures, and the available services be prepared and made easily obtainable. It should spell out clearly and explicitly the required competencies in a given area and the alternate assessment techniques. It should tell the learner where and to whom to go, depending on his needs and circumstances. Thus, whether with or without a counselor, the candidate would be involved in establishing his goals and in choosing the assessment techniques to be used. Those techniques would vary, depending on the situation and the competency, from written tests to oral exams and from artistic performances to reviewing other evidence of achievement submitted by the learner. Consideration of the candidate would be maintained throughout the process by giving him the right to appeal his assessments and final evaluation to the Regional Committee.

At the hub of the assessment process are the assessors, a bank of individuals with a variety of backgrounds to assess competencies. Carefully selected certified teachers with special training would assess the required communication and computation competencies. In the optional curricular areas, such persons as work supervisors,

union personnel, artists, scientists, professionals, and para-professionals would be considered as assessors. These persons would be selected and appointed by a Coordinator of Assessment. There would also be a network of learning consultants who would function in the assessment process by reviewing a candidate's status, by helping the candidates to determine assessment needs, and by helping to select appropriate assessors. These counselors would sometimes collect evidence of achievement and submit it directly to the Coordinator of Assessment for evaluation, who would have supervisory control over the assessment process. The coordinator would also certify the candidate's fulfillment of requirements for the External High School Diploma and present this information to the Regional Committee for the External Diploma. The members of this body would be appointed by the State so that they would serve as a liaison between the region and the State. The Committee would make the final recommendation to the State Education Department, or its authorized agent, that the candidate be awarded his diploma. Thus, the assessment system would revolve around the group of assessors, with support from counselors and with control and direction from a Coordinator, a Regional Committee, and the State of New York. The assessment process is depicted in the diagram on the following page.

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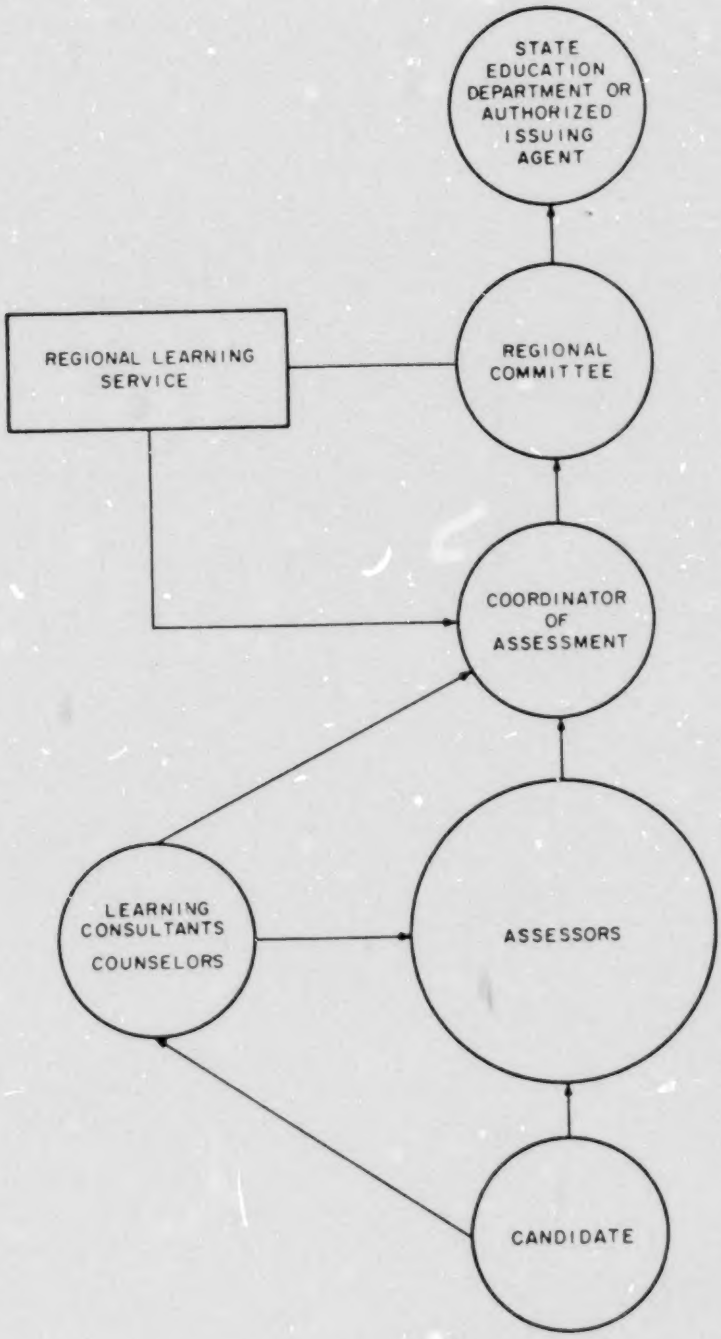


I. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The following brief outline describes recommendations for flexible assessment techniques for external diploma candidates:

Assessment Techniques for Competencies

A. Assessor could use variety of techniques as appropriate, such as:

1. Tests[2]

   a. Diagnostic

   b. Criterion-based

   c. Objective scores on standardized instruments

   d. College aptitude tests

   e. Iowa

   f. Achievement scores

   g. New York State Regents examinations

2. Existing records

   a. School

   b. Armed Forces training schools[3]

   c. Courses provided by community organizations such as Red Cross, Fire Department, Boy and Girl Scouts, Manpower, hospitals, Neighborhood Youth Corps

   d. Courses provided by unions, industry, business

   e. Correspondence courses

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[2]It is intended that only criterion-referenced tests will be used to assess the Generalized Comptencies.

[3]Arrangements could be made to utilize the assessing methods of the American Council on Education's Commission for the Accreditation of Service Experiences(CASE). CASE recommendations for the awarding of credit for service-connected courses are already acceptable by the Regents.

3. Documented evaluation of experience presented in a written, taped, or video-taped format

4. Interviews and oral exams

5. Creative work submitted by candidate

   a. logs

   b. contracts

   c. written appraisals

   d. final papers

   e. portfolios

   f. finished products

   g. artistic performance

In sum, the recommended assessment mechanisms are an attempt to meet the goals of flexibility, credibility, and candidate participation that are intrinsic to an alternate path to the high school diploma. It is hoped that they will allow the candidate to have a clear sense not only of where he is going, and how he will get there, but of knowing he has arrived!

## CHAPTER V

## The Areas and Levels of Competency

An external diploma curriculum has been developed by the Design Group with the understanding that it should be constantly reviewed and renewed with participation of candidates, diploma holders, and educators in the region. State-mandated subjects have and will be accounted for. The initial objectives for the external diploma fall into two categories: Generalized Competencies and Individualized Competencies.

The Generalized Competencies include those that are considered by the Design Group as prerequisites to further learning, to effective job seeking, and to fulfilled living. They are grouped under Communication Skills, Computation Skills, and Life Skills.[1] No point, unit, or academic grade system is needed since all candidates must be able to demonstrate behaviorally a given set of competencies in each of the three general areas. If the external diploma proposal is approved, the competencies, expressed as behavioral objectives with suggested modes of demonstration, will be further refined to specify more concretely the performance levels. Reading and arithmetic are considered essential core skills. Self-awareness, decision making, and job preparedness, while less easily demonstrated, are important for all candidates.[2]

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[1] See Appendix VIII for specific performance objectives.

[2] If State-wide minimum proficiencies for high school diploma candidates are established as announced April 26, 1973, the external diploma criteria would be adjusted to reflect those standards.

Individualized Competencies are those chosen by each candidate according to her/his interests and goals. No two candidates would be expected to display the same competencies in the individualized skills area. There are, in fact, an infinite number that they can present to meet diploma objectives. They must develop advanced vocational-technical skills, thorough preparation for post-secondary education, or specialized competencies in life skills. To meet the requirements of the individualized competencies portion of the diploma criteria, the candidates must demonstrate one of these accomplishments. The Coordinator of Assessment will be responsible for determining whether the areas and levels of optional competencies presented by each candidate are acceptable in satisfaction of diploma requirements.

A secondary education can rarely develop sufficient occupational skills for a lifetime of work given the evolving manpower requirements in a period of accelerated technological and economic change. Nonetheless, the external diploma should encourage and recognize occupational proficiencies. A candidate will be required to attain a level of proficiency expected in a high school or BOCES occupational program. Many adults will have achieved these levels on the job, in trade union apprenticeship programs, or in manpower training programs.[3] By the end of 1974, assessors will be able to use as criteria the occupational skill objectives under preparation in the State Education Department, Office of Occupational Education.

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[3] Some members of the Design Group would like to explore ways in which credit might be awarded for years of consistent, responsible performance on the job, in the home, and in the community.

In preparation for post-secondary study, candidates must acquire the particular skills, knowledge, and understanding required for learning in collegiate or vocational institutions depending on the student's aims. All must demonstrate strong general learning skills, including the abilities emphasized by Jerome Bruner as required for (1) acquisition of new information, (2) transformation and application of knowledge, and (3) evaluation of method and results.

SUMMARY
COMPETENCY CRITERIA
REGENTS EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

I. Generalized Competencies

A. Communication Skills

1. Reception: reading, listening, viewing

2. Expression: writing, speaking, non-verbal

B. Computation Skills

1. Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division: Use with whole numbers, fractions, percentages, and decimals

2. Data Interpretation: Statistics, graphs, charts

C. Life Skills and Knowledge

1. Self-Awareness (health, aesthetic, self-concept, decision-making, group interaction)

2. Social Awareness (citizenship)

3. Consumer Awareness (purchase choices, personal finance, property maintenance)

4. Scientific Awareness (application of basic principles)

5. Occupational Preparedness (job and education)

II. Individualized Competencies

A. Achievement of Advanced Occupational Skills

Competencies expected to be achieved in occupational, vocational, technical, or work-study sequences in high school and BOCES programs. Their achievement can be measured by using as criteria the objectives for occupational competencies under development in the State Education Department.

B. Preparation for Post-Secondary Study

Advanced skills in areas of communication and computation, as appropriate and necessary to success in the post-secondary institution of the candidate's choosing, plus a sequence in an academic discipline.

C. Development of Specialized Competencies

Individualized set of competencies that demonstrate an advanced level of achievement in one or more of the areas included under life skills in the generalized competencies portion of the curriculum. Recognition and credit would be given for individual talents which do not fall under the two areas mentioned above.

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| I. GENERALIZED COMPETENCIES | II. INDIVIDUALIZED COMPETENCIES |
|---|---|
| COMMUNICATION SKILLS<br>1. READING – LISTENING – VIEWING<br>2. WRITING – SPEAKING – NON-VERBAL | ADVANCED ACHIEVEMENT IN OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS |
| AND | OR |
| COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS<br>1. ADDITION<br>2. SUBTRACTION<br>3. MULTIPLICATION<br>4. DIVISION<br>5. DATA INTERPRETATION | PREPARATION FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDY<br>1. ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS<br>2. ADVANCED COMPUTATION SKILLS<br>3. SEQUENCE IN AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE |
| AND | OR |
| LIFE SKILLS<br>1. SELF-AWARENESS<br>2. SOCIAL AWARENESS<br>3. CONSUMER AWARENESS<br>4. SCIENTIFIC AWARENESS<br>5. OCCUPATIONAL PREPAREDNESS | ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALIZED COMPETENCIES<br>1. ARTISTIC<br>2. ORGANIZATIONAL<br>3. POLITICAL – ECONOMIC |

29/50

## II. COMPETENCY CRITERIA FOR REGENTS EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

CHAPTER VI

## The Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of the Regents External High School Diploma Program must be designed so that services to the diploma candidate are both clearly defined and easily accessible. These services would include counseling, referral to learning opportunities, and assessment of competencies. Furthermore, the administrative organization must institutionalize accountability to the State of New York for applying approved criteria and assessment techniques for the external diploma. Finally, it must carry State prestige while incorporating representation of the five-county area, providing liaison with educational and other institutions in the community. The program needs independence to innovate in the development of options, and, at the same time, needs linkages with school systems and the community for cooperation, economy, continuity, and credibility. The proposed administrative organization is suggested with these considerations in mind.

### Regional Learning Service

The Regional Learning Service of Central New York, a division of the Syracuse University Research Corporation,[1] would administer the external diploma program on a demonstration basis for the New York State Education Department for three years. During this time, it would explore the

[1] The Syracuse University Research Corporation is a not-for-profit corporation chartered in June 1957, by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York as an educational corporation.

possibility of long term administration by one of the existing local units such as BOCES, the local school systems, or perhaps the community colleges. It would work in cooperation with these and other existing institutions, both to coordinate functions and to avoid unnecessary conflict or duplication. At the end of the demonstration period, it would make recommendations for administration through one or more of the other units so that the model could be used in any region of the State.

Regional Policy Committee

A Central New York Regional Committee for the External Diploma would be a policy-making body, providing direct accountability to the State Education Department for operation of the program. The Director of the Regional Learning Service and the Coordinator of Assessment would be accountable to the Regional Committee for the application of Committee policies on assessment. Appointments would be made by the Commissioner of the State Education Department. It is recommended that at least some members of the Committee be drawn from the Design Group which developed the proposal for the external diploma. A 20-member board is suggested, with initial terms of three years. A recommended composition of the Committee is:

(5) High school teachers/counselors[2]

(2) Potential or former external diploma candidates

(3) Local school district superintendents

(3) High school principals

[2]To be nominated to the Department by the teachers' unions as the teachers on the Design Group were chosen.

(2) BOCES superintendents

(2) School board members

(1) Higher education

(1) Labor

(1) Business/industry

The Regional Committee would set assessment policy, monitor its application, certify fulfillment of requirements, and review the entire program as experience reveals the need for changes. It would provide vital linkages with the State Education Department, local school districts, and community agencies and business. With diploma candidates and holders included in its membership and as a board of appeals for learners, it should also be a check on RLS. The members should elect their own chairman on an annual basis and develop their own rules of procedure.

Finance

The cost of the demonstration project should be borne directly by the State Education Department for three years. During that time, means will be sought to secure annual funding by individual school districts which could include in their Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) the number of out-of-school students under 21 who are taking part in the external diploma program. In this way, credence would be given to the State's interest in such a new diploma. Local interests would be promoted because of the "shared ownership" arrangement the WADA assistance would provide. A fee structure will be developed for students over 21. Major employers have indicated in interviews that they would reimburse the instructional and assessment costs incurred by employees who are candidates for the

external diploma. Some of the unemployed candidates will qualify for educational assistance under Federal-State categorical programs (e.g., handicapped and welfare recipients).

A budget will be submitted to the State Education Department if the proposal is received favorably. It will include amounts to support assessment, instructional, and administrative services. The cost of evaluation should be included.

Evaluation

In order to ensure that the program remains responsive to the needs of the candidates for whom it has been designed, a continuing evaluation must be a part of the demonstration project. It will be the responsibility of the Director of the RLS to design a feedback system to gather formative evaluation data from the candidates. This will facilitate a process of renewal and change within the program as experience dictates that it is necessary.

Evaluation will not only guarantee the continued relevancy of the program. It is also a necessary component of the system which must be designed to satisfy the need to maintain accountability to the State Education Department. Annual reviews of the program, conducted jointly with mutually acceptable criteria by the State Education Department and the Director of the RLS, will supply guidance to those involved in the program at several intermediate points in its implementation. A summative evaluation at the end of the three-year project, conducted jointly by the State Education Department, the Director of the RLS, and the Regional Committee, will judge the total

effectiveness of the demonstration project. The Regional Committee will develop evaluation criteria for approval of the State Education Department.

Recapitulation

The responsibilities and structural relationships in the Regents External High School Diploma Program can be encapsulated in outline form.

A. Learning Consultants

1. Chosen, trained, and supervised as part-time employees of RLS by Coordinator of Learning Consultants

2. Role in guidance and instruction

   a. Establish trusting relationship with client

   b. Help client to diagnose own abilities and knowledge to plan educational goals, and to select appropriate learning resources

3. Role in assessment

   a. Review clients' existing educational records to determine present status and future assessment needs

   b. Refer clients to approved assessors

   c. Submit client records when appropriate to Coordinator of Assessment

B. Assessors

1. Chosen, trained, and supervised by Coordinator of Assessment

2. Certified teachers trained to assess by behavioral objectives communication and computation skills

3. Bank of diversified individuals qualified by education and/or experience to assess occupational and academic achievement; e.g., certified school and BOCES teachers, union officers, work supervisors, college professors, test administrators, professionals in area of competency, etc.

C. Coordinator of Assessment

1. Professional employed full-time by RLS and responsible to the Director of RLS for administration of assessment

2. Accountable to the Regional Committee for application of its approved assessment procedures

3. Maintains liaison with schools and teachers' unions to identify, recruit, select, train, and supervise assessors

4. Receives and approves assessments

5. Certifies fulfillment of diploma criteria to Regional Committee

6. Conducts continuing formative evaluation of assessment procedures and results

7. Proposes to Regional Committee changes in assessment procedures and diploma criteria

D. Coordinator of Learning Consultants

1. Professional full-time employee of RLS responsible to Director of RLS for administration of Learning Consultant Network

2. Recruits, selects, trains, and supervises part-time learning consultants

3. Accountable to Regional Committee for advisement to candidates for Regents External Diploma

E. Coordinator of Learning Resources

1. Professional full-time employee of RLS responsible to Director of RLS for mobilizing learning resources for external students

2. Establishes and maintains information flow to RLS learning consultants from secondary, post-secondary, proprietary, and correspondence institutions whose educational programs are available in the region

3. Seeks out learning resources in corporations, trade unions, social agencies, and cultural institutions, and informs learning consultants

4. Operates talent bank of tutors

5. Arranges for new learning programs and experiences at request of learning consultants on behalf of clients

F. Director of the Regional Learning Service

1. Full-time employee of Syracuse University Research Corporation (SURC) of which the RLS is a division

2. Accountable to the Regional Committee for the Regents External Diploma for RLS counseling and assessment services to candidates for the external high school diploma

3. Accountable to Central New York Consortium for the External Degree for RLS services to candidates for post-secondary certification

4. Responsible to the President of SURC for fulfillment of contract with State Education Department and for proper use of State funds

5. Responsible for conduct of formative evaluation during three-year demonstration, and for participation with the State Education Department and the Regional Committee in a summative evaluation at the conclusion of the demonstration

6. Supervises activities of Coordinators of Assessment, Learning Consultants, and Learning Resources

G. Central New York Regional Committee for the External Diploma

1. Policy group appointed by the Commissioner of Education including persons from education, business, labor, and the community.

2. Responsible to the State Education Department for implementation of State-approved criteria for the external diploma

3. Reviews at least annually the diploma criteria in light of experience and recommends changes to the State Education Department

4. Develops and approves assessment procedures and monitors their application by Coordinator of Assessment

5. Certifies candidates for diploma to BOCES superintendent or other issuing agent designated by the State

6. Hears appeals from diploma candidates on certification decisions made by the Coordinator of Assessment

7. Provides liaison with State Education Department, local school systems, and county/city teachers' unions

H. Central New York Consortium for the External Degree

1. Composed of all institutions of higher education -- two-year and four-year, public and private -- in the five-county region

2. Designed and sponsored Regional Learning Service

3. Oversees RLS services at post-secondary level

4. Provides linkages with higher education institutions for RLS clients of all ages

I. State Education Department

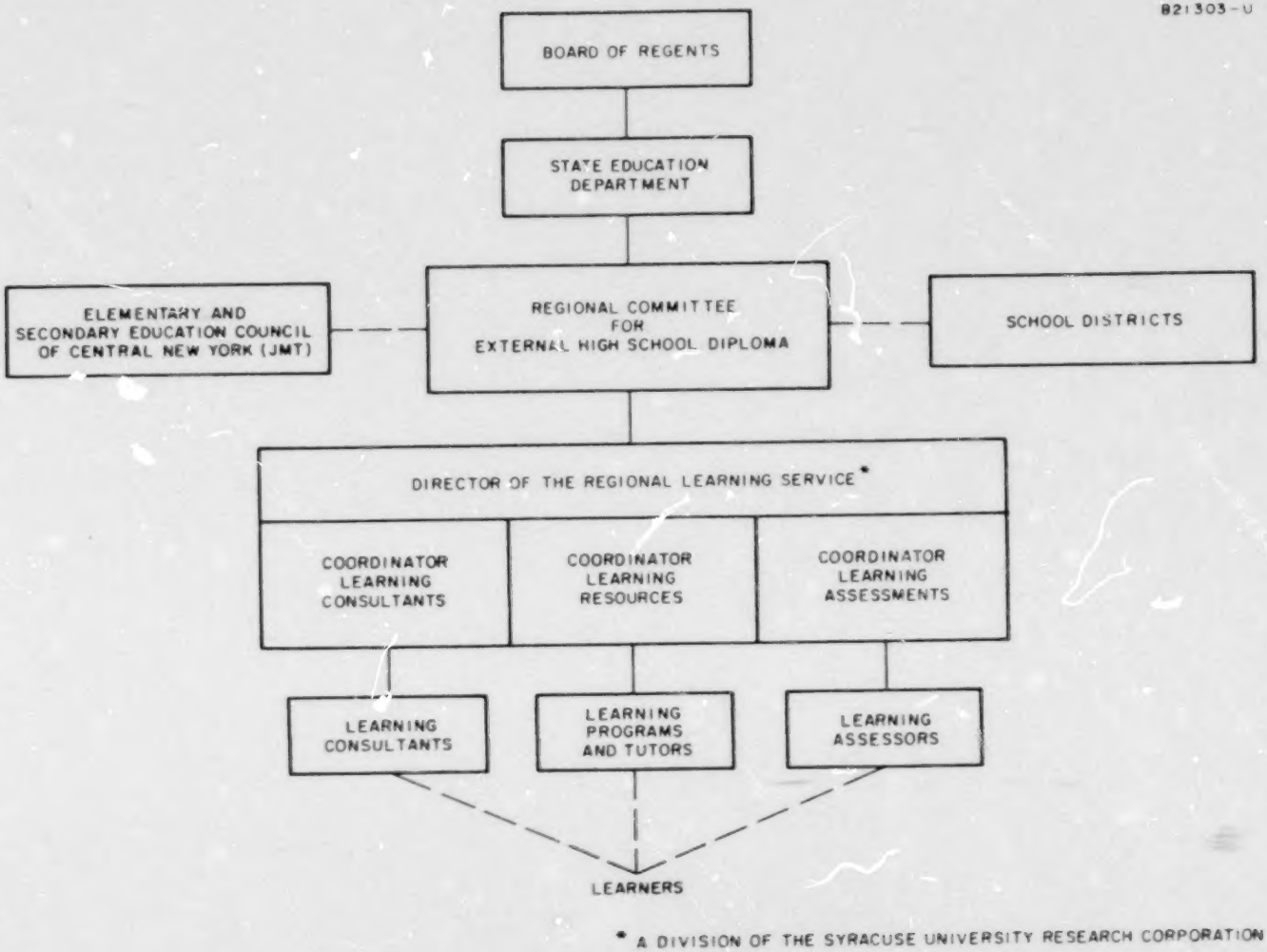
1. Approves and funds three-year demonstration project

2. Appoints members of Regional Committee for the External Diploma

3. Approves diploma criteria

4. Awards Regents External High School Diploma through BOCES superintendents, superintendents of Big Six city school systems, or other authorized agent upon certification by Regional Committee

5. Reviews program annually and undertakes summative evaluation after three years in conjunction with Regional Committee and Regional Learning Service




## III. ORGANIZATION FOR REGENTS EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAM

APPENDIX I

Regional Learning Service of Central New York

The Regional Learning Service of Central New York was established in January 1973, within the Syracuse University Research Corporation (SURC) with initial short-term funding from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (Grant No. OEG-0-72-5342) and the New York State Education Department. The organization was developed by local educators and representatives of the public, catalyzed and coordinated by the Policy Institute of SURC, under the chairmanship of Stephen K. Bailey.[1] With grants from the Ford Foundation, the two-year project studied the feasibility of an external studies program which would make available a wide range of traditional and non-traditional educative resources to all those who sought flexible means to prepare for career goals and for high school diplomas and post-secondary level degrees.[2]

Participating in the study and in the endorsement of this proposal are the Elementary and Secondary Educational Council of Central New York and the Central New York Consortium for the External Degree. The Consortium was established for this purpose in September 1971, by all the 14 colleges and universities--public and private, two-year and four-year--in Syracuse and the surrounding five counties. The Empire State College of the State University of New York is also a member because of its State-wide, non-campus program.

Representatives of these bodies identified the needs for an external studies support system and developed operational procedures for the Regional Learning Service in consultation with representatives from business, organized labor, proprietary vocational institutes, cultural institutions, and potential client groups (e.g., production workers, urban/rural high school dropouts, minorities, college and high school students, college "non-completers").

In order to respond effectively to the educational needs of citizens in the Central New York area, the Regional Learning Service has been created to pursue the following objectives:

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[1] Stephen K. Bailey, now Vice President for Government Relations of the American Council on Education, will be a major consultant to the Regional Learning Service.

[2] SURC reports to the Ford Foundation: Alternative Paths to the High School Diploma, Stephen K. Bailey, Francis U. Macy, and Donn F. Vickers, and Regional Learning Services: A Design for Educational Flexibility, Stephen K. Bailey and Francis U. Macy, April 1973.

-- to help people choose and prepare their career paths.

-- to provide a spectrum of flexible learning options to citizens of all ages, socio-economic levels, and academic backgrounds whether or not they are enrolled in school or college.

-- to develop and apply academically sound techniques for validating learning from experience and non-traditional study.

-- to inventory and make available tutors, autotutorial materials and formal courses conducted by corporations, labor unions, military bases, professional associations, and proprietary institutions as well as schools, colleges, and universities.

-- to produce new learning materials and to create new learning experiences where existing regional resources fail to meet individual needs.

-- to foster integration of secondary and post-secondary education by facilitating enrollment of qualified high school students in college-level courses and utilization of secondary vocational training resources by college level students.

-- to create a new type of counseling and support service tailored to learners' needs beyond the purview of any single academic institution.

The Regional Learning Service of Central New York is affiliated with the Elementary and Secondary Educational Council and the Conference of Presidents of Central New York. The latter fosters inter-institutional cooperation among three private universities (Syracuse, Cornell, Colgate), seven private colleges, and 13 campuses of the State University of New York.

Each institution in the Conference of Presidents decides what it can contribute to the operations of the Regional Learning Service. The RLS will refer to them for instruction and recommend to them for certification a new clientele of external students. Participating institutions will be expected to send RLS up-to-date information on scheduled courses and special offerings, and to enroll but not necessarily matriculate RLS students referred to them. Arrangements will be sought to supply library resources to RLS students, provide qualified personnel (faculty, staff and spouses) for the assessment and tutoring services of RLS, permit RLS students to use campus buildings on a space available basis, and compensate RLS for administrative and testing services rendered to them.

During the initial period of requested developmental funding, administrative support of the Regional Learning Service will be provided by the Syracuse University Research Corporation.[3]

The internal administrative structure of the Regional Learning Service includes a small core staff of professionals and a network of part-time learning consultants. The Director of RLS is Francis U. Macy and the Associate Director and Coordinator of the Learning Consultant Network is Donn F. Vickers. In the core staff also will be specialists in educational resources, evaluation, testing, and academic assessment.

The counseling and facilitating services will be carried out by 26 part-time learning consultants during the first year in which 1,000 to 1,500 clients will be provided continuing in-depth services while many more will receive one-time responses to specific inquiries for information. The learning consultants, chosen from different parts of the region, will be directed and supported from a center in downtown Syracuse but will engage in much of their counseling at places of employment, at home, and in other settings that are accessible and comfortable for clients. They will visit other towns on a regular schedule.

The Regional Learning Service will be capable of providing a unique combination of services to all Central New Yorkers interested in further learning. Individual parts of these services are to be found within some educational institutions for the benefit of those therein enrolled. It is the combination of counseling, facilitating, and assessing as well as the easy availability to those beyond the institutional walls that makes the RLS unique. Chief executives of many regional institutions expect that RLS will provide a center of information on educational services throughout the region and on regional educational needs that will prove very useful to planning by educational institutions and to coordination of their program efforts. The main focus of the RLS, however, will be on the individual student or potential student wherever he may be educationally, physically, or pyschologically.

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[3] Organized by Syracuse University in 1957 as an independent not-for-profit research and development organization chartered by the Board of Regents on behalf of the Education Department of the State of New York as an "educational corporation". Engages in problem-oriented research and development in the physical and social sciences with a strong emphasis on educational planning, innovation, and finance under contracts between the U. S. Office of Education/the State Education Department, and the Corporation's Policy Institute and Educational Policy and Research Center (EPRC).

APPENDIX II

CENTRAL NEW YORK

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL

Paul Haley, Chairman
District Superintendent of Schools
Cayuga County BOCES

Charles Ahern
Superintendent of Schools
Oswego City School District

Kenneth R. Chapman
District Principal
Weedsport Central School District

Monsignor Thomas Costello
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Syracuse

William Deming
Superintendent of Schools
Dryden Central School District

Walter Franklin
District Superintendent of Schools
Cortland County BOCES

Gordon Hastings
District Principal
Hannibal Central School District

Irvin E. Henry
District Superintendent of Schools
Onondaga-Madison County BOCES

Robert Hughes
Superintendent of Schools
Chittenango Central School District

Robert D. Lynch
District Principal
DeRuyter Central School District

Burton Ramer
District Superintendent of Schools
Oswego County BOCES

Edwin Weeks
Acting Superintendent of Schools
Syracuse City Public School System

Edward Witko
District Superintendent of Schools
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga County BOCES

APPENDIX III

REGENTS EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Design Group Participants

Secondary Education

B.O.C.E.S.
Irvin Henry, Superintendent, Onondaga/Madison County
Burton Ramer, Superintendent, Oswego County

District Administrators
Richard Hibschman, Superintendent, Westhill School District
Sidney Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary and Continuing Education, Syracuse City School District
Hans Lang, Director, Occupational and Continuing Education

School Board Members

James Cranfield, Auburn Enlarged School District
Jean Geibel, Cortland School District

Principals

Kenneth Lane, Executive Principal, Liverpool High School
Anthony Murabito, Principal, Oswego High School

Teachers/Guidance Counselors

Elisabeth Barker, School Social Worker, Central Technical High School
Robert Bond, Science Teacher, Hamilton Central High School
Lillian Britt, Guidance Counselor, H.W. Smith Junior High School
Lionel Meno, Instructor and Project Coordinator, Occupational Learning Center, Syracuse, City School District
Alice Neill, English Teacher, Norwich High School
Sara Walker, Guidance Counselor, Central Technical High School

Students

Chico Bonaparte, Empire State College
Mark Charles, Jamesville-Dewitt High School
Judy Houston, Washington Irving Learning Center
Sue Wetherell, Jamesville-Dewitt High School

Higher Education

Peter Blomerley, Academic Dean, Tompkins/Cortland Community College
John Henderson, Dean of Instruction, Morrisville Agricultural & Technical College
Alvin Nelson, Director, Project Equality, LeMoyne College
Dolores Weiss, Professor of Psychology, Cazenovia College
Charles V. Willie, Vice-President of Student Affairs, Syracuse University

Business and Industry

Carter B. Chase, Vice-President, General Counsel & Secretary, Crouse-Hinds Company
John Haynes, Treasurer, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
George Lindemer Jr., Executive Vice-President, First Trust & Deposit Company

Labor

William Mazur, Executive Secretary, Greater Syracuse Labor Council
John Stanley, Business Agent, Local #320/I.U.E.,A.F. of L.-C.I.O.
Samuel Villani, Secretary Treasurer, Local #22, Service Employees International

Government/Civic

Margo Northrup, President, Board of Crouse-Irving/Memorial Hospital
Elsie Finkelstein, Assistant to Thomas Sheldon, Deputy Commissioner, New York State Education Department, Albany
Edith Regensburger, Syracuse City Councilwoman-At-Large

Regional Learning Service Staff

Francis U. Macy, General Consultant and Director, Regional Learning Service
Donn F. Vickers, Chairman of the Design Group, External Diploma Project and Associate Director, Regional Learning Service
Kenneth Wood, Special Consultant
Joseph Vianese, Special Consultant
Janet Besse, Staff Assistant
Jean Kordalewski, Staff Assistant
Dorothea Nelson, Staff Assistant

APPENDIX IV

OFFICIALS OF NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
CONSULTED ON DESIGN OF EXTERNAL DIPLOMA

William Bitner
Associate Commissioner
Instructional Services

Robert Carothers
Bureau of English Education

Elsie Finkelstein
Special Assistant to
Thomas Sheldon

Earl Flat, Supervisor
Bureau of In-Service Education

Ted Grenda, Director
Division of General Education

Bernard Haake
Assistant Commissioner
Instructional Services

Frank Hawthorne
Bureau of Mathematics Education

Joseph Mangano, Chief
Bureau of General Continuing
Education

James Moore, Director
Pupil Personnel Services

Robert Seckendorf
Assistant Commissioner
Occupational Education

Thomas Sheldon
Deputy Commissioner of Education

Hugh Templeton, Chief
Bureau of Science Education

Sherman Tinkelman
Assistant Commissioner
Examinations and Scholarships

Gordon VanHooft, Director
Curriculum Development

William Webster, Coordinator
Project Redesign

APPENDIX V

## Analysis of People Without Diplomas in Central New York

A. Categories

1. Those for whom society has provided limited access to educational programs

   Homebound
   Physically handicapped dropout
   Maternal dropout
   Pregnant teenager
   Hospitalized/institutionalized

2. Those whom the present programs do not adequately motivate or serve

   Self-made skilled - no discipline
   Turned-off high school student
   Ex-convict
   Disenchanted dropout
   Drug addict
   Ex-drug addict
   On-the-street unemployed

3. Those with unique needs

   Low reading level
   High ability level
   Mentally handicapped
   Apprentice dropout
   Exceptionally talented
   Non-academically oriented
   Non-English speaking
   Immigrant
   Culturally unique
   Rural
   Transient worker
   Economic dropout
   Past school age
   Over 62

APPENDIX V

B. Statistics for the Five Counties

| | Population Aged 25 and over | Number in Age Group with 3 years or less of high school | % of Age Group with 3 years or less of high school |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cayuga County | 41,923 | 20,246 | 48.0% |
| Cortland County | 23,117 | 10,158 | 43.0% |
| Madison County | 30,755 | 13,662 | 44.0% |
| Onondaga County | 249,492 | 99,479 | 40.0% |
| Oswego County | 50,451 | 26,475 | 52.4% |
| Five Counties Combined | 395,738 | 170,020 | 42.9% |

APPENDIX V

C. Five-County Distribution of High School Dropouts in 16-21 Age Group*

| | Population Aged 16-21 | High School Dropouts in Age Group | Dropouts as % of Age Group | % of 5-County Population in Age Group | % of Total Dropouts in 5 Counties |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cayuga County | 2,803 | 1,065 | 38% | 10.2% | 11.2% |
| Cortland County | 2,000 | 640 | 32% | 7.0% | 6.7% |
| Madison County | 2,318 | 927 | 40% | 8.3% | 9.7% |
| Onondaga County | 17,544 | 5,615 | 32% | 62.6% | 58.9% |
| Oswego County | 3,318 | 1,294 | 39% | 11.9% | 13.6% |
| Five Counties Combined | 27,983 | 9,541 | 34% | | |

53/54

*Extrapolated from 1970 census data. As used here, term "dropout" refers to persons in age group without a high school diploma and not enrolled in school.

APPENDIX VI

## Case Studies of Potential Candidates for the External Diploma

I. Interviews with Parents' Group at a Syracuse Junior High School

Five of these ten women, all between the ages of 30-40 years, have a high school diploma. Those who lack the diploma valued the opportunity to participate in an external learning program. There was expressed need for the "insurance" a diploma might provide for enlarged job opportunities. Also important to these women was the sense of increased personal authority a diploma could give in parent-child relationships. The group was particularly interested in exploring means of assessing life experiences of a non-academic nature and facilitating transfer of accumulated credits.

II. Interviews with Syracuse Court Rehabilitation Project Counselors

These counselors welcomed the opportunity an external diploma program would create for enlarged work-study experiences for young adults charged with crimes (mostly misdemeanors) applicable to Syracuse City Court, and released on their own recognizance while they participate in the rehabilitation project. The need to provide supportive services for their participants was paramount.

III. Interviews with Syracuse Court Rehabilitation Project Participants

A. Lost interest in school, began hanging around with drug users. He would like to be in a part-time learning program if "people would make me feel like they were interested in helping me."

B. He would try to get an external diploma if he could work with a teacher one-to-one and "people didn't make fun of me." Left school because he couldn't do the work and felt he had no personal support.

C. "School structure" was hard to handle. He wanted an external diploma not only for increased job opportunities, but to give him "some status in the community." He would like to get into "social work to help people like me."

IV. Interviews with Inmates at Jamesville Penitentiary

A. Although this 43-year-old skilled welder felt no need for a high school diploma he welcomed the possibility that an external learning program could provide for developing particular skills, such as blueprint reading. He insists that his children need a high school diploma because, "Times have changed, and they will need a diploma to achieve in our modern society."

B. A prison art program encouraged this man, a carpenter, to develop his talent. He expressed interest in an external diploma program if his carpentry skills and art work could be awarded credit.

V. Interviews with Persons in Varied Situations

A. A 48-year-old plumber dropped out of high school, but now he regrets that decision. Although he runs a very successful business in town, he would consider very seriously the external diploma.

B. A woman in her late 50's dropped out as a freshman in high school because of family problems. She feels she is too old but thinks the external diploma creates a new chance for others like her.

C. A 40-year-old woman left school at 15 and married. She worked in an office effectively until her husband had to change jobs. After moving, she was unable to get an office job because she had no high school diploma. She would like very much to take advantage of an external diploma.

D. A 27-year-old man, who works in an automotive body shop, left high school in his senior year because "English, especially poetry, is worth nothing. In fact, it's worth two nothings." History was also dead to him. He cited several very successful people who don't have diplomas. But he feels ashamed when he is with his wife's family who are all college graduates. Also, his son, now two years old, will not look up to him in a few years and might drop out of high school, too. Therefore, if it were available, he would get an external diploma.

APPENDIX VII

## Learning Resources for the External Diploma

Resources are copiously available, ready to be imaginatively used, to extend educational opportunities for the diverse needs of Central New York residents.

### On-the-Job Training Programs

Several types of programs which offer vocational training are available in the area. Although many of these programs are not awarded academic credit, they are comparable to courses offered by high schools in the region. A Skill Center, located in Syracuse and federally funded under the Manpower Development Training Act, provides instruction in many occupational fields such as auto mechanics, welding, machine tools, office occupations, practical nursing. Remedial education in English and mathematics is also offered to participants.

Additional efforts, supported by Federal and State funding, as well as area businesses, industries, and labor groups, offer extensive on-the-job training. Mathematics, science, clerical skills, drafting, blueprinting, photography, are only a few among many possible learning programs. The experience of individuals who participate in these programs could be considered for credit towards a high school diploma.

Special resources exist to extend opportunities for young people who lack the high school diploma. An 18-year-old high school dropout is placed as a nurse's aide in a local rest home. Her responsibilities involve feeding patients, dispensing medications, records keeping, and sensitivity to patients' emotional needs. A public works garage gives employment to a teen-ager, who found school a drag. His fascination with motors compels him to take advantage of available training in auto mechanics and he becomes proficient at that trade. A day care center leans heavily on the dance and drama skills of their paid assistant, who left high school when she was in 11th grade. The work performed by these young people demands a multiplicity of skills which are at least equal to those gained in a traditional high school.

### Community Services

Community service organizations exist that sponsor important learning activities. The region is fortunate to have two professionally-run nature centers that can provide training in botany, ecology, and living off the land. Both the Rogers Conservation Center in Sherburne, New York, and the Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville, New York, are available for research in plant as well as animal and fish life. Conversations with the director of the Rogers Center indicate that he would support use of center facilities by external high school diploma candidates.

Although it is customary to consider organizations such as Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts in terms of social and recreational needs of young people, they also can provide important learning experiences for adults. Many men and women who do not presently have a high school diploma hold leadership positions in Scouting. A person who accompanies a group of young campers on a week's wilderness expedition develops competencies in several areas. He must understand food management, first aid, map reading, and botany. A woman who serves as a Girl Scout leader acquires skills in citizenship when she initiates a unit that focuses on local government and arranges visits with elected town and city officials. While these activities, in themselves, cannot represent sufficient preparation for a high school diploma, they could fulfill partial requirements. Other individuals may wish to combine experiences in health related fields to earn a high school diploma. Resources of area "T" Houses and Neighborhood Health Centers could be used for studies of nutrition, personal hygiene, and family management. Elements of biology, mathematics, and sociology would be involved in such instructional programs. Basic science skills can be acquired through work-study arrangements with hospital laboratories.

Cultural Institutions

When the entire community is viewed as a classroom, endless learning opportunities are revealed. The diverse cultural institutions in Central New York enrich educational programs for the independent student. The Salt City Playhouse/Community Center for the Arts is a year-round performing-teaching company. It includes adult and youth companies, and a new school of high promise for the performing and related arts. Center activities will provide instructional programs in drama, theater management, instrumental music, theory, and composition.

The Annual Festival of Nations, sponsored by the Cultural Resources Council of Syracuse and Onondaga County, involves many young people in a wide variety of activities, including costume design, dance, music, and cooking. The Director of the Council has stimulated planning for the new Onondaga County Civic Center; its large multi-purpose theater and smaller studio theater will further expand learning programs for the person pursuing an external high school diploma. There will be opportunities not only for performance, but in areas such as set design, choreography, stage lighting, and dressmaking.

Exciting musical programs exist throughout the region. Original compositions by persons pursuing independent musical study can pass the hard test of audience approval in a performance by the Soul Generation. A candidate talented in music theory and harmony can apply his skills to musical theater company productions in Cortland, Hamilton, and Syracuse, New York. What is true for drama and music is equally true for the dance and art. The nationally known Everson Museum of Art encourages many kinds of learning experiences; its library is available for research in various art forms, and a wide variety of art classes are conducted in the museum's well-equipped studios.

Use of these cultural facilities will not only provide legitimate learning programs for the independent student; it will also encourage broad community participation in museums and other cultural institutions as their activities become better known and more fully used.

Public and Private Education

For some students, independent study can be combined with course offerings in public high schools in the five-county region. Opportunity for participation in the study of regular high school courses is offered in many communities through evening classes or extended school day programs. Individuals engaged in full-time employment during the day can enroll in late afternoon and evening high school classes for courses in general academic areas, business and distributive education, and industrial arts and fine arts.

Special programs, designed to attract individuals who lack the high school diploma, are often available. Liverpool High School, for instance, offers an intensive secretarial training course designed to qualify the student for employment, following a year of intensive study in typing, shorthand, office machines, and office practices. Successful completion of such a program could be credited toward a high school diploma.

Many school districts offer adult education classes in a variety of fields that are designed specifically to serve the needs of older community residents. Courses are generally taken without credit, but are similar in nature to regular evening high school courses. They include academic, vocational, avocational, and recreational activities. These courses could be an important source of instruction for the external diploma candidate.

Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) operate vocational training centers and evening courses that could provide credit for a high school diploma. Programs designed to make participants employable are available in many fields, including floral design, licensed practical nursing, cosmetology, and dental hygiene.

A large number of private schools and proprietary institutions offer training through a variety of instructional programs. Many institutions combine practical training with evening study. A glance at the Syracuse Metropolitan Telephone Directory identifies a vast array of available programs that range from drafting and electronics, karate and judo, computer programming and data processing, to motel and restaurant management. The challenge is to provide the external learner sufficient guidance to ensure that his learning is relevant and productive.

## Community Colleges

Community colleges in the Central New York region offer both credit and non-credit courses that might be of value to the external diploma candidate. This is particularly true in the case of occupational courses. Community colleges commonly offer a wide array of vocationally oriented courses in fields such as business administration, accounting, secretarial skills, allied health, industrial technologies, and community services. The courses taken at a community college might complement work experience, be of an exploratory nature, or help the candidate to gain entirely new skills and competencies. The possibilities for the learner range from trying out a course or two, with the credit applied toward a diploma, to completing a substantial part of a program of study. It should be borne in mind that a person who satisfactorily completes 24 hours of college work in a recognized program of study is eligible for the equivalency diploma.

Many community colleges have remedial--often called developmental--programs in reading and mathematics which might be appropriate for the external diploma candidates who have difficulty in meeting basic skill competency levels in these areas. Study in a community college, with other older students, would be a viable option for the adult learner; programs rely on supervised independent study which is particularly suitable for these individuals.

## Courses by Newspaper

The University of California, San Diego, recently developed academic courses available to newspaper readers throughout the nation and abroad. Although these courses are presently limited to college levels, the concept could be applied to high school requirements. The newspaper has many advantages as a medium of instruction. It is inexpensive; it can be kept indefinitely; it can be read at the learner's convenience at his home or at his place of employment.

## Correspondence Courses

Correspondence courses have been conducted at the high school level for many years by educational institutions, government agencies, the armed forces, business, and industry. They can provide instruction in literally hundreds of fields for those who are unable to pursue study away from their homes. New correspondence courses, which utilize audio-visual techniques, can be of great value to the external student.

## Vocational and Avocational Experience

Credit could be granted to external diploma candidates for skills which are developed as a result of work experience. Although the training may be informal, para-professionals in fields such as child care, recreation, health, and education commonly develop interpersonal skills, a knowledge of community,

service, or educational agencies, and special skills applicable to a particular type of job. Insofar as these job-related competencies can be demonstrated, credit can be legitimately assigned to vocational experiences.

## Special Reading Programs

For many individuals who lack a high school diploma, remedial help in basic reading skills is essential. Syracuse is fortunate to have two nationally recognized organizations which specialize in designing programs to train the functionally illiterate to read.

Laubach Literacy, Inc., bases its system on a one-to-one relationship between instructor and student. Federal funding has enabled the organization to develop a highly successful program for training volunteers to teach reading. Based on a one-to-one teacher-student relationship, Laubach Literacy, Inc., has specialized in the teaching of reading to young students, although its methods are easily adaptable for older age groups.

Literacy Volunteers, Inc., has developed diagnostic tests that can help plan productive reading programs for the individual adult student. The director has expressed interest in the external high school diploma program and believes that his organization could be of help in several ways. Through their files, volunteers could be located who could tutor individuals or small groups of students. Tutorial materials recently developed under contract with the New York State Education Department could be used in teaching programs.

A third organization, Adelanti, provides special help in teaching Spanish-speaking people skills in basic English. When individuals have mastered sufficient command of the English language through Adelanti programs, they can seek further remedial help in reading through Laubach, Inc., or Literacy Volunteers, Inc.

The Syracuse City School District provides an excellent reading program through its continuing education center. The external student who needs training in reading and communication skills to achieve the high school diploma will find this program relevant.

## Instructional Methods

The student pursuing a high school diploma on an independent basis can benefit from the burgeoning array of comprehensive instructional models now available. Although various systems differ from each other, they all feature concepts that are of particular value to the external high school concept. Pre-tests or diagnosis determine the most relevant instructional program for the individual student; learning activities based on the pre-test are prescribed; post-tests are given to measure the learning achieved.

The range of commercially prepared learning materials suitable for an external diploma program is enormous. Catalogues, such as the Westinghouse Learning Directory, can identify available programs, but it is important that materials be evaluated to be certain that learners are guided to instructional methods appropriate to their needs. Consideration should also be given to storage of necessary equipment. Arrangements might be made with libraries, community colleges or public schools to provide space for learning materials to be used in an external diploma program.

Computer-Assisted-Instruction (CAI) programs have been developed in a variety of subjects. This drill and practice system involves the student for a specified period of time with a computer terminal, although there is a considerable variance in the amount of time each student is tied to the computer. In some cases, the computer generates specific worksheets for the student and he must return to the terminal each time he completes a worksheet in order to receive another prescription. In other cases, the computer merely lists references and suggestions which the student may pursue on his own. Terminals may be located at any site where a phone line is available and can be tied in with computers already owned by universities, school systems, or businesses. Such an instructional format, which enables the student to move ahead at his own pace, is an important resource for the independent student.

The potential value of video-taped programs has great implications for an external high school student. Instructional programs can be aired over local educational television channels or through closed circuit systems. Different levels of viewer involvement can be achieved through the use of pre-printed student guides, worksheets, reinforcement sheets, or assignments given by the instructor, over video-tape, to his students. There are already available in the region video-tape instructional programs in typing and general science. Programs developed by individual school systems could be shared to provide maximum benefit for students in the five-county area.

The wide use of cassette recordings recently has stimulated the increase of instructional audio-recording tapes. With appropriate manuals and directions, such materials provide highly flexible learning opportunities. Equipment is inexpensive, portable, and easily available.

Other important learning resources are the Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) and Activity Kits developed in many subject areas and available locally. LAPs are teacher-prepared materials designed specifically to self-pace learners. Alternatives and choices are incorporated into each LAP to accommodate various needs of learners. The LAP focuses on a single major learnable idea, skill or attitude; it requires consultation with a teacher when the student needs help. Activity kits differ slightly from LAPs in their emphasis on simulation, projects, and participation activities. They are particularly useful for instruction in the basic sciences. With proper diagnosis and prescription, Activity Kits and LAPs can be extremely effective instructional tools for the external high school student.

## Instructional Personnel

Important as learning materials are for the external learner, they cannot replace a concerned teacher. Instructors can be the most sensitive and flexible components of any instructional system. Central New York is rich in human resources and the external high school concept can utilize the sensitive, competent talent available. A resource file of persons proficient in particular subjects or skills should be developed to serve the needs of students throughout the region.

Conversations with the director of ACCORD, a senior citizens group in Syracuse, indicate the willingness of many retired people to serve in a tutorial capacity. The abundant skills and experiences of retired teachers, librarians, artisans, and businessmen could be of benefit to learners pursuing the external high school diploma. Not to be overlooked is the fresh outlet this service would provide older people, who are too often locked into lives of loneliness.

There are other groups who can provide important teaching skills. College and university students could be enlisted; area volunteer centers, with their extensive files of talented personnel can be contacted; service organizations, such as the Lions, Jaycees, or volunteer firemen, include a wide variety of concerned citizens who have special skills. Family support groups could be developed which would encourage parents and young people to work together. In some instances, a daughter could be a tutor to a non-diplomed parent, while in other instances, a young person can be assisted by a parent. This approach would be helpful in rural areas, particularly, where distance and transportation inhibit wide human contacts.

Potential instructors can be found through contacts with schools, businesses, industries, and community organizations. The list of human resources is endless and limited only by timidity and imagination.

## Educative Space

Another important component of the external high school diploma program is adequate educative space. Again, the five-county region has ample facilities available. Many public and private institutions are under-utilized and it appears likely that cooperative arrangements could be made with schools, churches, commercial institutions, museums, and libraries for use of meeting rooms.

More than 700 churches and synagogues are located in the area. Many of them have small classrooms and large meeting rooms. The director of the Metropolitan Church Board of Syracuse has expressed interest in the idea of using churches for learning purposes.

There are approximately 50 high schools in the area, excluding private and parochial schools. For the most part, schools, with their enormous classroom space and other resources, are not in use weekends or after school closings on week days. Their use for external high school students would depend upon arrangements with local school boards and principals.

Libraries can provide not only educative space, but their immense learning resources can be of benefit to the external student. The five-county region is served by four public library systems: Finger Lakes, Mid-York, North Country, and Onondaga. Although some of these libraries are small, inter-library loan systems enlarge the material available to learners. In addition, there are many libraries associated with colleges and universities in the region that allow persons other than their own students to use their facilities on a reference basis. Public high school libraries can also be useful to the external learner. Some schools in the region open their libraries at specified evening hours to accommodate community needs.

Community institutions, such as YMCA's and YWCA's, Girls' Clubs and Boys' Clubs, Jewish Community Centers, and other neighborhood associations have meeting rooms that can be used by area residents. Since many potential external diploma candidates may be unwilling or unable to leave their own neighborhoods, use of community space would be particularly valuable.

The list of educative space extends further. The 29 museums and historical associations in the area encourage community outreach and would make their facilities available. Area businesses and industries frequently allow their meeting rooms to be used, often at little or no charge. What is true for learning resources and instructional personnel is equally true for educative space; external learners can utilize the abundant materials available in the five-county region.

APPENDIX VIII

Performance Objectives in Areas of Competency

The performance level of external diploma candidates will be assessed in all of the areas of generalized competency: (1) Communication Skills, (2) Computation Skills, and (3) Life Skills. In addition, the attainment of individualized competencies is expected in one of the following categories: (1) Achievement of Advanced Occupational Skills, (2) Preparation for Post-Secondary Study, and (3) Development of Specialized Competencies. While there are specific performance objectives for all candidates in generalized competencies, there are no common objectives in the individualized areas of competency.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

I. Reception: Reading, Listening, Viewing

A. Candidates should meet the criterion of functional literacy by demonstrating the following set of basic skills in receiving and interpreting information that is written, spoken and non-verbally communicated in contexts and settings familiar to them:

1. Recall

2. Recognizing main idea/supportive detail differences

3. Drawing inferences

4. Understanding analogy

5. Differentiating between fact and opinion or propaganda (commercial, political, etc.)

6. Following directions

B. Examples of tasks to demonstrate receptive skills (number in parentheses indicates skill tested)

1. Read and describe labels, schedules, classified advertisements, catalogs, etc. (2,3)

2. Retell to assessor a news story from local paper, the plot of a story, facts from a tape (1)

3. Read a paragraph from Reader's Digest, e.g., or prepared paragraph for testing and give main idea (2)

4. Recall details from a played back taped newscast (1)

5. Read and state theme of a TV play, movie, or short story (2)

6. Describe a character from a TV play, movie, or short story (3)

7. Solve a mini-mystery from clues (3)

8. Give main point of an article which informs by analogy, e.g., a teaching lesson on the solar system: the sun is a grapefruit, etc. (1, 2, 4)

9. Evaluate a local letter-to-the-editor or a TV commentary (5)

10. Evaluate a political pamphlet or a political TV speech (2,3,5,)

11. Evaluate a TV commercial or a newspaper/magazine ad (5)

12. Perform successfully on "trick test" satire on following directions (a classic) (6)

13. Report on a meeting (1,3,5)

II. Expression: Writing, Speaking

A. Candiates should meet the criterion of functional expression by demonstrating the following basic skills in life situations, simulations, or examinations:

1. Ability to communicate specific information in written and spoken form

2. Ability to organize material

3. Ability to adapt written and spoken communication to a particular listener or reader

B. Examples of tasks to demonstrate expressive skills (number in parentheses indicates skills tested)

1. Write a one-page letter, which is comprehensible and organized, in response to a want ad (1,2,3,)

Write an autobiography for a dean of admissions, a possible employer, a personal diary, or a message to your grandchild (1,2,3)

3. Write a paragraph developing a main idea (1,2)

4. Summarize in writing a newspaper or magazine article (2)

5. Recount a personal event to assessor's satisfaction (1)

6. Assume the role of a given person and speak or write as he would on a given topic (3)

7. Make a presentation to a community meeting or chair it (1,2,3)

## COMPUTATION SKILLS

A. Candidates, through the application of basic computational skills to everyday problems, should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Add whole numbers
2. Add fractions
3. Add mixed numbers
4. Add decimals
5. Subtract whole numbers
6. Subtract fractions
7. Subtract mixed numbers
8. Subtract decimals
9. Multiply whole numbers
10. Multiply decimals
11. Divide whole numbers
12. Divide decimals
13. Find averages
14. Intertranslate fractions, decimals, and percents
15. Find a percent of a whole number
16. Find a percent of a decimal
17. Use instrument to measure common English unit of:
    a. length
    b. volume
    c. weight
    d. time
18. Find area and volume given necessary measurements
19. Convert common English units of:
    a. length
    b. area

c. volume
d. weight
e. time

20. Derive information from charts, graphs and tables of statistics

B. Examples of tasks to demonstrate computational skills (numbers in parentheses indicate skills tested)

1. Compute one's own gross and net income (1-12)

a. daily
b. weekly
c. yearly

2. Compute the difference between cash and installment buying (14,15,16)

3. Compute and fill out short form of state and federal income tax forms (1,4,5,8,9,10,11,12,14,15,16)

4. Utilize comparative shopping skills (2,3,6,7,14,19)

## LIFE SKILLS

I. Self-Awareness

A. Competencies in Health

Candidates should demonstrate that they possess the information and abilities to exercise responsibility for their own health and that of their families.

B. Competencies for Aesthetic Expression and Response

C. Competencies for Decision Making

D. Competencies for Relating in Groups

II. Social Awareness

Candidates should demonstrate that they can apply to their own lives the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. They should also be able to discern the historical roots of contemporary problems in their own and other cultures. Their ability to do

so can be demonstrated by evidence from actual or simulated experiences which draw upon citizenship skills.

III. Consumer Awareness

Candidates should be able to make consumer choices which meet their needs and the needs of society. This requires awareness of economic, psychological and sociological forces which influence assessment of their personal needs and establishment of their individual purchasing priorities. It requires awareness of the ecological impact of planned obsolescence and consumer goods disposal.

IV. Scientific Awareness

Candidates should have sufficient scientific understanding to make interpretation of scientific and technological information meaningful to their lives and to participate in making decisions required by a technological age. These competencies can be demonstrated through some behavioral method such as written, oral, dialogue, manipulative, etc. Where possible, a problem should be posed and its solution by the candidate constitute the showing of competency.

V. Occupational Preparedness

Candidates should demonstrate basic abilities and behaviors necessary to career and educational planning, to identification of opportunities, to acceptance and to performance on the job and in post-secondary institutions.